

**Subject: Opposition to proposed Bill 5653**

Dear Committee members:

Well, here we go again. Every year the Honorable Representative Gilchrest drags out her punitive tax on law abiding citizens to force them to pay for gun violence prevention programs in Connecticut's lawless cities.

I am a permitted firearm owner in Connecticut who abides by Connecticut's myriad of gun laws and follows all accepted safe gun handling guidelines, please tell me why I must be forced to pay additional taxes for those people in our State who don't follow the same firearm practices?

I think everyone will agree that the only way for a gun owner to become proficient in the safe handling and use of a firearm is through frequent practice. Practice requires the purchase of ammunition. Adding an additional tax (\$2.50 per standard box of 50 rounds) will only lead to a reduction in the amount of practice that a lawful gun owner will undertake with their firearm. Firearm ammunition in Connecticut is already taxed 11% above the State sales tax. If safety is indeed the agenda, then it should be obvious that making it substantially more expensive to become proficient in firearm handling will result in a reduction in overall safety.

Additionally, perhaps the Honorable Representatives supporting this bill do not understand the connection between private gun ownership and the esteemed men and women who serve in law enforcement and our military. Do the sponsors of this bill believe that these valued members of our community just "sign up" with no previous knowledge in the use of firearms? The proficient use of firearms (which requires frequent practice) prior to one's service is crucial in developing the best police officers and soldiers to protect our country.

Finally, as I write this, many punitive gun laws across the country are being repealed in the State and Federal Court system based on the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in "New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen". Any new law which penalizes all law-abiding citizens by forcing them to pay for the illegal activities of a small lawless segment of our society will most certainly be met with litigation. Is the Government of the State of Connecticut (and by that I mean its citizens) so awash with money that we can waste it on litigation over yet another punitive anti-second amendment law?

I respectfully Urge the Committee to **Reject proposed Bill 5653**, as it has had the good sense to do in past legislative sessions.